



State of South Carolina
Office of The Lieutenant Governor

André Bauer
Lieutenant Governor

Office on Aging
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For Immediate Release:

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Medicare Part D Deadline Is December 31

Lt. Governor André Bauer would like to remind all South Carolinians that the deadline for changing Medicare Prescription Drug coverage plans for 2007 is December 31.

"Seniors who are happy with the drug coverage they have right now, or who have drug coverage from another source besides Medicare don't need to worry about this," said Bauer, "but anybody who signed up for one of Medicare's stand alone Part D plans last year and isn't happy with that plan for whatever reason has until the end of the year to change to another plan for 2007."

The December 31 Deadline is for stand alone Part D plans only. Medicare Advantage plan subscribers can make changes until March 31. Regardless of their plan type or current coverage status, Lt. Governor Bauer urged family members and loved ones of all Medicare beneficiaries to take time during the holidays to make sure that those individuals are getting the prescription drug coverage they need.

"It's possible that somebody in your family may have been putting off this decision because they don't understand the options or are intimidated by the enrollment process," said Bauer. "I would just encourage anyone connecting with family members who are over 65 during the holidays to talk about that with them. Our I-CARE Insurance Counselors in the state office will be on duty between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., on December 27, 28 and 29, and they can help with any question you might have."

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The toll free number to contact an I-CARE Counselor in the Lt. Governor's Office on Aging in Columbia is **1-800-868-9095**. People calling from the Columbia area can also use 734-9900. Individuals can also make changes to their stand alone Part D plans by using the www.medicare.gov web site or by calling 1-800-MEDICARE (633-4227). The toll-free lines are manned 24 hours a day, according to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

I-CARE Counselors in South Carolina's 10 Regional Area Agencies on Aging can also help with Medicare-related questions. The graphic below provides contact information for each regional office. (Holiday hours in the Regional Offices may vary, so call for schedules.)

Important Telephone Numbers to Call for Help

Services available directly from your Regional Area Agency on Aging (AAA) include the following:

- I-CARE insurance counselors, who can help you with information about Medicare and its prescription drug program
- Information, Referral and Assistance Specialists, who can help with locating services or making referrals using SC Access and other community resources
- Family Caregiver Advocates, who specialize in helping individuals caring for elderly family members and grandparents raising children
- Long Term Care Ombudsmen, who investigate suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation of seniors and vulnerable adults in facilities and provide information on advanced directives and living wills



Region 1, Appalachia - (864) 242-9733

(Anderson, Cherokee, Greenville, Oconee, Pickens and Spartanburg counties)

1-800-434-4036 (outside Greenville County)

Region 2, Upper Savannah - (864) 941-8050

(Abbeville, Edgefield, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick and Saluda counties)

1-800-922-7729 (outside Greenwood County)

Region 3, Catawba - (803) 329-9670

(Chester, Lancaster, York and Union counties)

1-800-662-8330 (outside York County)

Region 4, Central Midlands - (803) 376-5390

(Fairfield, Lexington, Newberry and Richland counties)

1-877-744-5130 for I-CARE

1-866-394-4166 for IR&A Specialist

1-800-391-1185 for Ombudsman

Region 5, Lower Savannah - (803) 649-7981

(Aiken, Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell, Calhoun, and Orangeburg counties)

1-866-845-1550 (outside Aiken County)

Region 6, Santee Lynches - (803) 775-7381

(Clarendon, Kershaw, Lee and Sumter counties)

1-800-948-1042 (outside Sumter County)

Region 7, Pee Dee - (843) 383-8632

(Chesterfield, Darlington, Dillon, Florence, Marion and Marlboro counties)

1-866-505-3331 (outside Darlington County)

Region 8, Waccamaw - (843) 546-4231

(Georgetown, Horry and Williamsburg counties)

1-888-302-7550 (outside Georgetown County)

Region 9, Trident - (843) 554-2275

(Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester counties)

1-800-894-0415 (outside Charleston County)

Region 10, Lowcountry - (843) 726-5536

(Beaufort, Colleton, Hampton and Jasper counties)

1-877-846-8148 (outside Jasper County)